7:Crowder J-5 (1955-1958) 1959
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called 'Les Ballets Sereres du Sine Saloum,' a group of dancers who had won the Territorial Cup in 1957.

The theatre was packed. I was sitting next to an ample Jollof matron, a small child strapped to her back, its tiny nose buried in the pink muslin of her dress. Another child sat on her knee, beturbanned and clothed just like its mother. From the woman's forehead dangled three shining American dollars. Unfortunately a similar Jollof woman sat immediately in front of me, her black horsehair wig and tall tulle turban almost totally obscuring my view. A strong scent of 'Bint El Sudan' manufactured in East London perfumed the room as the curtains rose to the first dance, 'Love and its Caprices', which was to be the theme of the evening. The variations, the programme told me, were to include '*Allo M'Bissine*'—'My fiancée has beaten me because a boy who loves me told me "Hello M'Bissine" ', and later '*Khodia Kha Lola*'—'Why do you cry Khodia? Only the Gods understand what a tear says'. Ending with an initiation dance of future circumcision candidates. One of the most memorable dances was a solo by a woman with a baby strapped to her back, its head swaying backwards and forwards like a punch ball. The child uttered not a murmur as its mother danced into a frenzy, singing at the top of her voice, and in the background a corps of drums beat an hysterical rhythm. It was an entertaining evening, with a beautiful dance of a slight youth, his black-brown body shining sleekly in the glow of the footlights, contrasting with the powdered copper of his lissom partner, a girl of singular beauty with entrancing opalescent eyes.

After the performance there was a cast party to which Faye, the young secretary of the theatre, invited me. The dancers, various guests, European and African, drank bottles of Coca-Cola and orange squash. Amongst them was Ka Abdou Anta.

He was a handsome young man, but he dragged continuously at a cigarette and his teeth were discoloured with nicotine. His jacket, once well cut, was misshapen by papers stuffed into the pockets. My first meeting with Ka had been two years before but we had not been introduced. He was rehearsing a scene from his play *La Fille des Dieux*, which he was producing for the Théâtre du Palais. It was highly symbolic: a somewhat uneasy compromise between tribal metaphysics and the classical French